

# Analyzing the American Dream



On Thursday, October 6, Clark College will host a panel discussion about the rise in income inequality and the widening opportunity gap.

*Income Inequality: Is the American Dream at Risk?* takes place at 6 p.m. in Foster Auditorium on Clark's main campus. An opening reception will begin at 5:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

Four Clark College faculty from diverse disciplines will offer their expertise on the topic in a discussion that stems from the ideas set forth in a *New York Times* bestseller, *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis* by Robert D. Putnam. Discussion topics will include increasing disparity in income, the shrinking middle class, and the lack of opportunity for many Americans.

"The idea of attaining success through merit and achieving the

so-called American Dream is more difficult than ever,” said economics instructor Patricia Atkinson, who will be one of the panelists. “Statistics show that the middle class is shrinking at an alarming rate and there are fewer and fewer opportunities to get ahead in our current economy.”

Panelists are economics instructor Patricia Atkinson, political science professor Michael Ceriello, women’s studies professor Kushlani de Soyza, and sociology professor Dr. Don Ludwig. The discussion will be moderated by Dave Kosloski, professor of Communications Studies and former Speech and Debate coach for Clark’s award-winning debate team. Biographies of each panelist are listed below.

Clark College is located at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver. Driving directions and parking maps are available at [www.clark.edu/maps](http://www.clark.edu/maps). Anyone needing accommodation due to a disability in order to fully participate in this event should contact Clark College’s Disability Support Services Office at (360) 992-2314 or (360) 991-0901 (VP) prior to the event.

## **About the Panelists**

**Patricia Atkinson** has been an Economics professor at Clark College since 2008. She holds degrees from Marist College and Portland State University and is currently studying for her doctorate in education at Washington State University-Vancouver. Professor Atkinson’s research focuses on macroeconomics, economic growth and income inequality in the U.S.

**Dr. Don Ludwig** has been a professor of Sociology at Clark College since 2007. He holds degrees from Rutgers University, Princeton Theological Seminary and Whitworth University and earned his doctoral degree from Portland State University and the International University for Graduate Studies. Professor Ludwig’s research has focused on social change and transformational leadership as well as the equitable support

systems for disadvantaged youth.

**Kushlani de Soyza** has been a professor of Women's Studies at Clark College since 2008. A former newspaper editor, reporter, and radio producer, she holds degrees from the University of Cincinnati, Portland State University and Oregon State University. Her areas of interest in feminist theory include media and representation as well as exploring theories of race and racialization. Most recently she has been involved with Clark College's growing Learning Community Program.

**Michael Ceriello** has been a professor of Political Science at Clark College since 2007. In addition to providing political commentary for newspaper, radio, and television outlets in Minnesota, Oregon, and Washington, he also served as the director of Clark College's award-winning Model United Nations program from 2008-2011. Professor Ceriello holds degrees from the University of California at Santa Barbara and Western Washington University. His areas of interest include American national government and public policy.

**Dave Kosloski** has been a professor of Communication Studies at Clark College for the past 19 years. He served as Clark College's Director of Speech and Debate from 1998 until 2015; the program earned top honors among all Northwest community colleges for 14 of those years. He is currently serving his fifth term as chair of the Curriculum Committee.